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The Samaritan Pentateuch :

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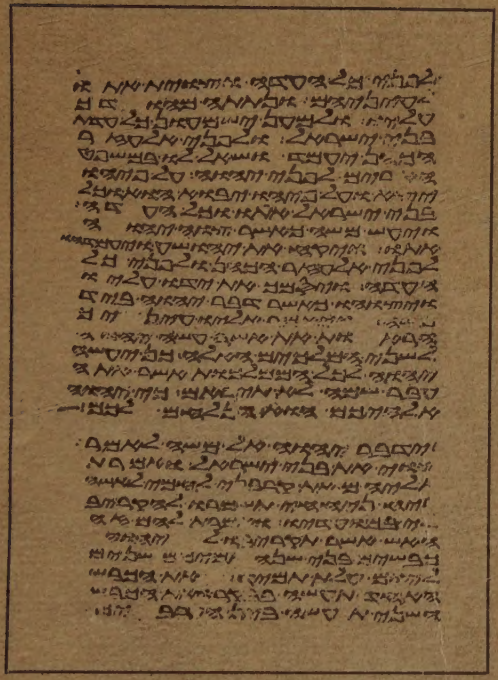

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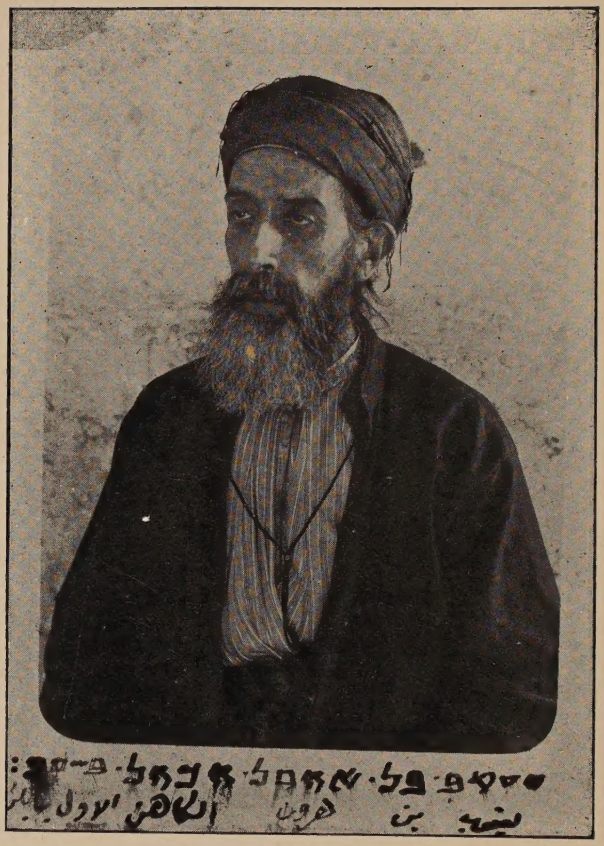

JACOB, SON OF AARON, HIGH PRIEST OF THE SAMARITANS AT SHECHEM.

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH:

THE STORY OF

A SURVIVAL AMONG THE SECTS.

BY WILLIAM E. BARTON, D. D.

AUTHOR OF "THE OLD WORLD IN THE NEW CENTURY," "THE PSALMS AND THEIR STORY," "JESUS OF NAZARETH: THE STORY OF HIS LIFE, AND THE SCENES OF HIS MINISTRY," ETC.

(Published in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA for October, 1903, and reprinted by the courtesy of its Editor.)

OBERLIN, OHIO:
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عن نابلس
في ٥ نيسان ٩٠٨

حضرة صديقي العزيز سند وليم هيس الله وجوده امين

بيد المسره اخذت تحريركم المرسول لي من جنابكم عن يد جناب حضرة دكتور براين فوجدته مسرورًا وحائزًا بحسن وداداكم وعرفوني انه الروح الذي هو سر التكوين الذي خذوه منه اولنا في العام الماضي عند مرورهم عنه هذه البلاد وانه ناقص توتة اصحاحات فهذا نحن كتبنا لكم كمال النقص ثم تسألون حضرتكم منه حضرته عن الكتب الموجوده عندنا فهذا قد علمنا لكم فايم بعلم الكتب الموجوده عندنا راجعوها عندكم وعرفونا عن الذي بلزمكم منا عرفونا عن يد حضرة المشار اليه بصكم كما تريدوه واخذكم منا سفر الخروج اربعة اصحاح تمامًا ودفع لي الثمن ومنه خصوص سوالكم عن ايماننا بالمسيح نحن نقول ان المسيح ابن الله واما سوال المسيحيين الروحانيين في معاملاتهم فهو حسن جدًا فاجوبة رسولي صورة حضرتكم فتعرفوه حتى تكون عندنا وتذكركم هذا ولا خلوه وسلامي لكل من لديكم اقدم

سمعون الكاهن الاول بطانة السدة
نابلس

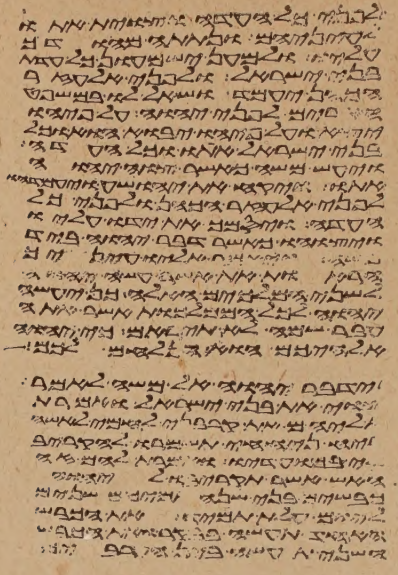
AUTOGRAPH LETTER IN ARABIC OF JACOB THE HIGH PRIEST.

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

BY THE REVEREND WILLIAM E. BARTON, D.D.

FOR several years prior to my tour of Palestine in 1902, I had noted with interest the accounts, in books on biblical antiquities, of the Holy Scroll at Nâblus. This manuscript, containing the Pentateuch, is believed to be the oldest manuscript in existence of any portion of the Bible. As the priests show it with great reluctance, and are supposed to exhibit it, even to their own people, only once a year, on the Day of Atonement, I was anxious that they should not substitute for it, at the time of my visit, the more recent parchment which on ordinary occasions they display. My friend, Mr. E. K. Warren, chairman of the World's Sunday-school Convention Committee of Arrangements, had visited Palestine the year before, and had seen the ancient scroll. He gave me a letter of introduction to the High Priest, written on his business letter-head, which rather formidable-looking document I found of service on my arrival in Nâblus. As my visit opened interesting personal relations with the High Priest, and has led me to some subsequent study of the Samaritans and of their Pentateuch, I shall give somewhat in detail an account of this interesting people, and of the contribution which their ver-

sion of the Pentateuch may afford to our knowledge of the Old Testament. I am the more confident of the timeliness of such an article, because recent books on textual criticism indicate a revival of interest in the Samaritan



LEAF FROM OLD SAMARITAN MANUSCRIPT.

version, and also because popular interest has lately been turned to the discovery of an old Samaritan Pentateuch in Damascus, which is said to have been written in 735 A.D. This manuscript is reported to be now in Cairo. I have recently learned that one of the younger priests of the Samaritan synagogue was imprisoned by the High Priest some months ago, on the suspicion of having stolen and sold an ancient manuscript from the synagogue there. Some people in Syria believe this newly-discovered Pentateuch to be the missing codex. This manuscript, if genuine in its date, would be several hundred years earlier than the oldest Old Testament manuscript in the British Museum; but it is still quite modern as compared with the

Holy Scroll of Nâblus, which the Samaritans declare was written by the grandson of Aaron, and modern scholars believe must be nearly as old as the Christian era.

The Samaritan sect has never been large or widely scattered. Two hundred years ago there were colonies in Damascus, Cairo, and Gaza; but all these are now extinct, and there remains but one community, and that, fortunately, the ancient one at Nâblus.

Nâblus, corrupted from Neapolis, occupies the site of ancient Shechem, and is the chief city of Central Palestine. Situated in a beautiful and well watered valley, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, with Jacob's well near at hand, it is the most fertile and one of the most interesting spots in Palestine. Here is found the one remaining colony of the sect founded by Sanballat and his son-in-law Manasseh, living under the shadow of the mountain where they built their synagogue soon after 432 B.C. There are about one hundred and sixty-five of them now, and their numbers are practically stationary. They lack marriageable young women, and will not marry out of their own sect. They are very poor, and could hardly live but for the fees of the tourists.

We arrived at the outskirts of Nâblus at the close of an afternoon in March, and, leaving our horses to be conducted to camp by muleteers, went on foot through the narrow and tortuous and often overarched streets of the city to the Samaritan community, that is situated at the upper end of Nâblus, at the foot of Mount Gerizim. The synagogue is the principal point of interest; and within the synagogue, which is plain and bare, the Holy Scroll is almost the only article of value. Both this and the substitute were exhibited to our company, the largest in recent years.

The High Priest Jacob stood beside the ancient roll, showing it with solemn pride. He calls himself, in an au-

tograph in my possession and written in old Hebrew and Arabic, "Jacob, the son of Aaron, priest of Shechem." He is a man a little above middle life, dark, dignified, and tall. His greeting was cordial. I presented my letter, but I could not make the priests understand from whom the letter had come, as they were unable to read it. Its lithographed heading, however, impressed them, and they treated me as became my probable right as a person introduced by some one whom they ought to remember, and who used a large and official-looking letter-head. It is altogether likely that they treated me with as great consideration as they would have done if they had been able to identify me.

Our company so filled the synagogue that I could not examine minutely the two old copies, but my impression confirms Conder's description of the case of the newer one as being of brass, with thin, silver arabesques. The older one seemed to be of solid silver, and the manuscript is very old, yellow, torn, and patched. The ink is much faded,[1] and is said to be of a purplish cast, as contrasted with the very black ink of all the other manuscripts.[2] At the close of my second purchase next day, I procured, as a premium, a small fragment of a very old manuscript, whose ink is so faded that one could hardly discern the color, save that on the back it has stained a distinct purplish hue. I could not understand the claim of antiquity which the priest made for it, but think he affirmed that it belonged to the most ancient scroll. I have no suspicion that the Samaritans would mutilate that holiest of manuscripts for money; but if I knew that, in the undoubted

[1] "The handwriting is small and rather irregular; the lines far apart; the ink is faded and of a purplish hue; the parchment much torn, very yellow, and patched in places, and bound at the edges with green silk" (Conder, Tent Life in Palestine, p. 26).

[2] "The ink is black in all cases save the scroll at Nâblus" (Deutsch Remains, p. 407).

repairings of the old one, some tattered bits like this had been cast aside in the process of restoration, I should be willing to be convinced that I have one of them. The manifest antiquity, the fact that it has long since been worn out of its place,—there is no new tear on any portion of its edge,—the yellow color of the parchment, the irregular lines as contrasted with the ordinary ruled lines, and the purple ink, make this not at all impossible.

The Samaritans believe that this oldest of their manuscripts, and the original from which all their later copies have been derived, was made by Abishua, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, a dozen years after the first crossing of the Jordan. They declare that it contains a cipher, made by the thickening of the stems of letters down the middle of the manuscript, giving the name of the writer and the date of the writing. This same inscription, however, is copied in other of the manuscripts, and thus reduces to a common level of incredibility what is of itself incredible. But it is doubtless many centuries older than any other known manuscript of any part of the Bible. It is altogether likely that it covers more than half the twenty-five hundred years that carry us back to the rupture between the Jews and the Samaritans. It is, indeed, a most venerable document, and is regarded by the Samaritans with almost superstitious reverence. It is written on the hair side of skins, said to have been the skins of rams offered in sacrifice. Conder and others say that it contains the skins of "about twenty rams." But, as it was not unrolled for Conder, this is a pure guess; and I am sure, judging from a copy of the Torah of the same width which I bought at Jerusalem, that there are not less than fifty-two of them. The leather is backed with other parchment, covered with inscriptions from the Law in larger letters. The width of the parchment is about sixteen inches, and it is wound on two rollers surmounted by large metal knobs, and the

whole is inclosed in a cylindrical case of silver, double-hinged at the back, so that it may be closed or opened at will, and the manuscript rolled either way, exposing, when the roll is open, a column at a time. The skins are sewed together, end to end, and must make the roll at least a hundred feet long.

A young priest, a son of Jacob the High Priest, gave me his personal attention, and brought me to where another attendant was selling little tin cases in facsimile of the great roll, each containing a small roll of paper with Samaritan characters on it. I was about to buy one of these, when, finding it to be the last on hand, and one of the ladies desiring it, I let her have it, and indicated to the priest that I greatly desired one for myself. He made some effort to find one, but apparently our large company had bought out the stock. There were none to be had. However, he brightened with sudden animation, and at the same time assumed an air of mystery. Taking me through the court into the connecting court of the High Priest's house, he led me up an outer stair into an upper room. Here he produced a scroll, and offered it to me, but had scarcely begun when the door burst open and the women of the household entered, protesting vigorously against what they supposed him to be about to do. He drove them out, shut the door behind them, and barred it. Then he and I began negotiations for the scroll containing a modern copy of the Pentateuch, inclosed in a tin case, the crude facsimile of the silver case below.

The book was written on hand-made paper about sixteen inches wide. The sheets sewed together made a scroll a hundred and six feet long. It is ruled with blind lines, fifty-four to the column, and contains two hundred and thirty columns. It begins with no heading, but has a colophon with a little scrollwork in red ink at the end, the colophon reading, "The Perfect Torah; Blessed be Jeho-

vah, who gave it."[1] The breaks between the five books are indicated by four lines of blank paper. The lines are ruled like the Jewish manuscripts, but not with ink. It was somewhat worn by use, and in one place had been worn in two. A good many corrections appeared in it, and in one or two places it had been patched by pasting a new piece over an error. It was these things that gave me assurance of its genuineness, for I could not read it. Had it been entirely new, I could have had no assurance that I was not buying a book made to sell to tourists. But the book was evidently one in present use in the synagogue. It showed the work of several different scribes in its different parts. It was not badly soiled, and seemed to me altogether desirable.

The price demanded, however, was larger than at the time I felt like paying, and our negotiations proceeded slowly. My companion talked very few words of English. He knew the value of an English pound, or "bun" as he called it, and this was his unit of value. When we failed to come to terms, he drew from under the bed in the room a copy of Genesis. It was newer than the other, with wider columns, and the lines were less regular and not ruled.

At length, and after all my companions had left the synagogue and returned to the camp outside the city, I came to terms with the priest. I was to have the second roll, Genesis, which I identified by our agreement on the name "B'reshith," and the case in which the larger roll had first been displayed. But he indicated that I must not be seen leaving with it in my arms. Wherefore the priest put it under his robe, took me into one of the overarched tunnels which abound in Nâblus, and there delivered the book.

[1] The last words are indistinct, and this may not be the correct translation; but the first part is plain,—"The Perfect [i.e. complete] Torah; Blessed be Jehovah."

With some difficulty I found my way through the strange, dark, narrow streets in the growing darkness, and returned to camp. Next morning I was glad to meet another of the priests, who came at five o'clock, bearing the roll which I had first been shown, and offered it to me for a less sum than at first he had asked. At length we agreed upon a price, and I wrapped the manuscript in cloth and brought it to Jerusalem, and from there conveyed it home. In addition to this and the book of Genesis, I bought a little volume containing the story of Joseph; a leaf of an older manuscript containing Numbers xxvi. 19–xxvii. 15, in very nicely-formed, bold letters; and the scrap of a very old and tattered parchment, evidently a fragment of a synagogue roll, with ancient writing (Gen. xxvi. 20–22) on one side, and modern writing on the other. It is this which I count possibly a fragment of the Sacred Scroll itself, because of its antiquity, its color, the irregularity of its lines, and its purple ink.

This apparent mystery in the sale of their manuscripts is almost wholly pretended. There was a time when no money would buy from the Samaritans a copy of their Torah. Dr. Robinson tells in his "Researches"[1] of his repeated efforts to buy a copy, and of his failure. Now, however, they are quite willing to sell their more recent manuscripts, or to make them to order.

[1] "They professed to have about a hundred manuscripts, and the priest said that he employs himself in writing out copies of the law. When asked if they would sell a copy, the answer was: 'Yes, for fifty thousand piastres'" (Vol. ii. pp. 281–282, A.D. 1838). This, of course, was a refusal, as the sum named was to them an immense one.

"The priest offered to dictate a translation of this latter [commentary] in Arabic to Yacob, to be written down by him for Dr. Smith at an expense of about three hundred and seventy-five piastres. But he would not (or did not) consent to part with a copy of the original at any price, saying that it was against their religion that any book in the sacred language and characters should go into the hands of strangers and foreigners. Perhaps the time will come when the offer of a high price will remove their scruples" (Vol. iii. p. 130, A.D. 1852).

The manuscript which I procured is, of course, entirely modern, but it has some interesting characteristics as compared with Kennicott's list of Samaritan manuscripts in European libraries. These various manuscripts were for the most part secured elsewhere than at Nâblus, and from private parties. Without exception they are in book form. Most of them are incomplete, and many of them are very fragmentary. My own is a scroll, entirely complete, and has been corrected, pasted, and revised, and is of the same width as the ancient one; it was made in the synagogue at Nâblus, by the priests, and doubtless was copied from, and compared with, their older manuscripts. It has been actually used in the synagogue worship, which is probably not true of any one of the manuscripts in European libraries to which reference has been made.

Returning to America, I was fortunate in receiving a visit from my friend, Rev. Frank H. Foster, D.D., who spent some weeks with me, and who offered to assist me in reading my purchases. To him I am greatly indebted for the assistance which makes this article possible. We found the book written in a language practically identical with the Hebrew, but in an alphabet much older; being, indeed, an independent development of the ancient Hebrew. We found an alphabet in McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia, our only other apparatus being a Hebrew Bible and lexicon, and these were quite sufficient. Dr. Foster began by transliterating into Hebrew, but in a short time was able to read readily without transliteration, and with such facility as readily to correct minor errors made in copying. To illustrate the unlikeness of alphabets, I may say that I had replaced the manuscript in the case, judging which side up it ought to go by the letter *shin*, which I thought I recognized. But instead of this largest of modern Hebrew letters, it proved to be *yodh*, smallest of them, and to belong the other side up.

The smaller roll, containing Genesis, proved to be incomplete, and I opened correspondence with the High Priest through Dr. Wright of the Church Mission Society Hospital at Nâblus. The High Priest has supplied the missing chapters, and the book is now entire. I have also procured the book of Exodus in four small volumes. I am now negotiating for other manuscripts through other friends in Palestine, as Dr. Wright has been called to England. Just before his return, however, he forwarded to me this interesting letter in Arabic, with the translation made at the Mission:—

"NABLUS, 25th April, 1903.

"My Dear Friend Mr. William, may God guard his existence, Amen.

"With great pleasure I received your letter sent me through Dr. Wright. I was glad to read it and was delighted with your good friendship. You made me know that the roll on which the book of Genesis was written by my son, was wanting three chapters; we have already written them.

"Further you ask about the books that are found with us, so I have made a list of the books found with us; you may look it over and let us know which you like and through the aforesaid [Dr. Wright] we will send whatever you want. He bought for you the book of Exodus in four parts complete and paid us the price.

"In regard to your question about our faith in Christ, we say that he is yet to come. The dealings of the European Christians are very good. May I ask for your photograph to remain with us as a reminder of you.

"Nothing more to say but to send my salaams to every one belonging to you.

JACOB [SON] OF AARON,

"Samaritan High Priest, in Nâblus."

I am glad to extend, to readers of this article, this greeting from the present head of this ancient sect, that has maintained the celebration of the Passover and other Old Testament observances, almost without interruption, and in one spot, for twenty-three centuries.

Three times a year,—at the feasts of unleavened bread, of weeks, and of tabernacles,—they make a pilgrimage to their holy mountain, Gerizim, and there, at the time of the Passover, they offer sacrifices. They are rigid monotheists, and they look for the coming of the Messiah in a

little more than a century, when, according to their computation, the world will be six thousand years old. The Messiah, as they believe, will be like unto Moses, but will not be greater than Moses.

The Samaritan religion as an independent system of worship has existed since 432 B.C., and had its origin in the opposition that arose against Nehemiah's attempt to divorce the priests who had married foreign women. One of these priests, Manasseh, son-in-law of Sanballat, the neighboring governor of Shechem, established the faith which has continued in that same spot from that day to this. It was the worship of Jehovah on the basis of the Pentateuch alone, and with the claim that Gerizim antedated Jerusalem, and was the one lawful place of worship. Jerusalem has been captured and recaptured, and its faith has changed from Jewish to Christian and from Christian to Mohammedan, but the faith of the founders of the Samaritan religion continues without change of location or essential change of form.

Besides their periodic celebrations on the mountain, they observe regular worship, and maintain a school, in their synagogue in the city. They are glad to add to their slender revenues from tithes the small fees, generally a franc each, which tourists leave in exchange for a supposed sight of their ancient manuscript.

Their relations with the missionaries are friendly, and I have no reason to suppose their expressions of good-will to Christians are otherwise than sincere.

The High Priest has written for me a "list of the books that are found with us," which has value as a contribution toward a Bibliography of the Samaritan Religion. This has been translated for me by Prof. J. R. Jewett, of Chicago University, whose courtesy I gratefully acknowledge, and I have compared it with Professor Pick's list in McClintock and Strong, whose articles there and in the BIBLIO-

THECA SACRA constitute the most valuable work accessible in English on these subjects. I have added a few notes to Professor Jewett's translation, as the result of this comparison. It will appear, however, that each list contains some titles not in the other. Prof. Milton S. Terry, of Northwestern University, has looked over the notes, and given me the benefit of his judgment in the matter.

1. Book of the Roll of the Law; that is, the five books of Moses only.

2. Kitâb el-Memyar, known as Maymar Marka (The Sayings of Maraka), embracing spiritual sciences dealing with the precious things of the sacred law. An ancient composition dating from somewhat more than two hundred years after the Messiah, as is made clear in th ecommentary on the Tolideh. And he was the most learned of the learned men of our nation (sect). It contains 663 pages. Translated into Arabic, with Hebrew (i.e. Samaritan) text, and explained in Arabic—complete.

NOTE.—Professor Pick gives the date about 50 B.C. It gives a commentary on portions of the Law.

3. Kitâb it tabâch (Book of Sacrifice). By Sheikh Abul Hasan of Tyre. Ancient Arabic, with Hebrew evidential examples. Containing precious instructions relating to Samaritan religious matters, and the solving of doubtful signs (questions), and the distinguishing of what is permitted from what is forbidden in any matter whatsoever. Number of pages, 300.

4. Kitâb al-Kâfi (the sufficient). By Sheikh Yusuf il-Askari. Ancient. Contains instructions and inquiries about everything in the Samaritan religion. The number of pages in this book is 270. Arabic, with Hebrew evidential examples.

NOTE.—Pick gives the date of this document as 700 A.D.

5. Commentary on the Fatiha. By Sheikh Ibrahim il-Kabâsi. Three hundred and fifty-one years old. Number of pages, 200.

NOTE.—A book explaining the blessings and cursings of the Law.

The name Fatiha is usually given to the first Sura of the Koran.

6. The Book of the Journey of the Heart to the Knowledge of the Lord (whose name is exalted). It also has . . . . May God be merciful to him. And in it are a number of commands and injunctions of the Law. Arabic, with Hebrew evidential examples. Number of pages, 200.

7. Book of the Commentary of the First Book, i.e. Brêsît (Genesis). Of the composition of Sheikh Musalim Al Marjân id-Deuafi. Contains a solution of the enigmas and difficulties of this Book. Contains 860 pages.

NOTE.—This commentary, which covers the entire book of Genesis, dates from the eighteenth century, according to Pick. Pick notes also

an older commentary on Genesis i.–xxvii., dating from the second century A.D.

8. Book of the Commentary of the Second Book, i.e. Book of Shenot (Exodus). Composition of Sheikh Ghazali 'd Dwaik. 805 pages.

9. The History of our Community from the Day the Samaritans entered the Holy Land to the Present Day. Collected by Jacob, present High Priest. In Arabic. Number of pages, 807.

10. The Book et-Tolideh, in Hebrew, with a number of important events given with their dates. Pages, 120.

11. A book containing ten chapters, from which may be learned the rites of the Samaritan religion, and what is their procedure in their prayers in every feast and festival, and what is their marriage, and what their divorce and their fasting, and the knowing of the clean from the unclean, and readings for the day of atonement. With readings from the Law. By the one indicated [i.e. the present High Priest], as was asked of us by one of the scholars of Europe, who did not take it, owing to his death before its completion. Contains 370 pages.

12. Book of Prayer, of ancient composition, said by Marka and Amram and the Priest Phinehas, and some of the prayers derived from Joshua the son of Nun. In Arabic writing. Contains 360 pages.

13. A Torah explained, i.e. translated into Arabic. Two parts, Arabic and Hebrew. Contains 620 pages.

14. A book of the orders of the prayers of the Sabbath of the celebration of the feast of the unleavened bread, and the night of the beginning and the day of the beginning, i.e. of the year, and the prayers of the night of the beginning of the month when it corresponds with the Sabbath, with all the proper words and ritual (sayings). By a number of well-known scholars. Number of pages, 250.

15. The book of the orders of prayer for fourteen days of Moed Aphsah morning and evening, and the prayers of the two Sabbaths which are in them and their orders. Contains 175 pages.

NOTE.—This is the feast of Unleavened Bread, which the Samaritans celebrate for two weeks. The distinction between this feast and the Passover is more marked among the Samaritans than among the Jews.

16. The book of the order of the prayers of the Feast of the Passover and its nights and its days, and the orders of prayer for the seven days of the unleavened bread and their Sabbaths, and all that concerns the sacrifice. Kiburim of the Passover in general and in particular. Contains 420 pages.

17. The order of the prayers of the fifty days, i.e. the Weeks, and all the orders of those weeks with their different arrangements. Number of pages, 220.

18. Book of the orders of prayers for the Wednesday, known as the Wednesday of Pentecost, and the Sabbath, with all their orders. Contains 340 pages.

19. Book of the orders of prayers of celebration of fast, i.e. the meeting of Moses and Haron, with the prayers of the night of Reosh-Ashena and its day, and the ten days of Hassalihu (?) evening and morning. Contains 300 pages.

NOTE.—Reosh-Ashena is the feast of the beginning of the year.

20. The order of prayers of the night of the great feast and its day and its ritual (lit. sayings), and all the rites attached to it. Contains 650 pages.

21. Order of the prayers of the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles and the eighth day of that feast, and the order of the Sabbath which falls in them. Pages, 240.

22. The Book on the Commentary on the Ten Commandments. Old. Composition of Abul-Hasm of Tyre. Arabic. Pages, 80.

23. Book of the Questions as to the Difference. By the Sheikh Menja. Eloquent language as to the matter of the Samaritan religion; and a reply to the Jews, and the debate between this Sheikh and the Sheikh el-Fajyâmī, the Jewish Rabbi. Number of pages, 240.

NOTE.—Menaji Naphes el-Din, the author of this controversial work, lived in the twelfth century.

24. Modern Hebrew book, giving information as to the birth of Moses, and what happened by his hand, and what helped him with the Egyptians, and praises about him. By the late Kazar, the priest. 120 pages.

25. A modern Arabic book, by Sheikh Ismial is-Rashi, May God have mercy on him. 120 pages.

26. The Book of Joshua, and Commentary upon it. Also the story of Balaam and the story of the second kingdom. Ancient composition. 150 pages.

NOTE.—This book has been known to scholars since 1584, when a copy was procured in Cairo. It is, excepting the Torah, the most valuable of the Samaritan books.

27. Book of the feast for the congregation of Israel, by various Samaritan scholars and Sheikhs. 150 pages.

28. Book of Joy (?) By a certain scholar. A collection of various materials. Pages 200.

NOTE.—This is possibly the treatise on Marriage mentioned in some bibliographies, written in the twelfth century by Abul-Barakat.

29. Book by an unknown author, ancient. Contains many things, Number of pages, 300.

NOTE.—This book, whose title is not clear, may be the historical exposition of the Law, showing how the ancients observed it. By Elhhabr Jacob, in the twelfth century.

30. Book of Wills and Testaments. Contains 200 pages.

NOTE.—This book was written by Abul-Barakat, in the twelfth century, who also wrote a book on marriage, which may be Number 28 above.

I am confident that the knowledge that these manuscripts are now obtainable will be welcome news to many scholars and friends of libraries. In recent years there has been little effort to procure them. While European libraries now contain more than the sixteen manuscripts—mostly incomplete—referred to in ordinary reference-books, the additions are neither numerous nor notable, and the number in America is very small. Drew Theological Seminary has one; a valuable codex procured by Rev. W. Scott Watson in 1892 is now owned by the New York Public Library;[1] and Mr. Watson has since procured another which he believes a very ancient one.[2] Every large public library and every theological library might well aspire to own one.[3]

It is a very interesting fact that the Samaritans accept the five books of Moses, and these only. When they broke away from the Jews, they took the books that at that time were most highly esteemed in Palestine. They did not take any of the prophets, though some of these men were from their own tribes; nor did they take the book of Joshua, though they could well have used it, and did indeed make up a sort of sequel, of which Joshua is the hero, to the story of the wilderness wanderings, which book of Joshua, however, they never admitted to their canon. This fact raises two very interesting questions. Had the Jews at 432 B.C. so far agreed upon the canonicity of their prophets that any other canon than the Torah was then generally recognized in Jerusalem? The earlier prophets existed, and some at least of the books of the Hagiog-

[1] See Presbyterian and Reformed Review, 1893; American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature, Vol. xviii. pp. 188-191; Hebraica (1892-93), pp. 216-225, (1893-94), pp. 122-156.

[2] Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol. xx. pp. 173 *et seq.*

[3] Since this article went to the printer, word comes to me that the British Museum has recently sent to Nâblus, and purchased a large number of desirable manuscripts from the Samaritans.

rapha; but was even the second of the groups of the sacred books then regarded as of equal authority with the Law? It would seem not. The second question is this: If we are to believe in a Hexateuch instead of a Pentateuch, why have not the Samaritans the book of Joshua? They could have used it admirably. Joshua was one of their own heroes, and made his home in their own city, and established on one of the mountains above it the first sanctuary after the settlement of the land. The Torah, with its five books or six, was complete, certainly by the time of Nehemiah (444 B.C.), and the Samaritan schism occurred in 432. Why have not the Samaritans a Hexateuch? I leave the question for others.

The value of the Samaritan Pentateuch is considerable, as showing the general accuracy of the received text. During all the centuries of separation, these two sects have preserved independently the first five books of the Bible without comparison, nor has either now the slightest disposition to compare. Each has copied from its own copies, and it is most remarkable that the differences are so slight and generally unimportant. The Septuagint is justly regarded as high textual authority; but the Septuagint is later by a century or more than the Samaritan. Moreover, the Septuagint is a translation, while the Samaritan is hardly more than a transliteration, or rather an independent preservation in an ancient but modified alphabet. Besides this, the Septuagint has often been compared with the Hebrew, while the Samaritan is independent. Surely this text is not less valuable than the Septuagint. And, while the men who made and used the Septuagint are long since dead, the men who are still making, from their ancient copies, modern copies of the Pentateuch in the Samaritan, still live and use it, and are under every possible motive, as their fathers were, to do their work well. Here, then, is opportunity to study textual criticism at first hand.

FRAGMENT OF VERY ANCIENT PARCHMENT CONTAINING GENESIS XXVI. 2–22.

(Possibly the very oldest in existence. Size of original parchment 5½x4½.)

Printing is "the art preservative of all the arts"—except one. The art of making manuscripts from earlier manuscripts dies beside the printing-press. To be sure, Hebrew manuscripts of the Pentateuch are still made for use in Hebrew synagogues, but who knows that they have not been corrected from printed copies? But Tischendorf's discovery at Sinai was not more surely independent of the printer and proof-reader than the newest copy of the Pentateuch which may be purchased from Jacob, the priest of Shechem. Even if the text had no value, in comparison with the Hebrew, the method by which the text is produced makes the student of textual criticism a contemporary with the scribes of all past ages.

It is instructive to compare the Samaritan and Hebrew texts as a basis for our conclusions concerning the Jewish means of preserving their texts. The Massoretic text has so obliterated all indications of individuality that we are left almost to conjecture for our theories of the care which the scribes bestowed on their work, and the liberties which they took with the text. The practice of the Samaritans will afford us an interesting insight into ancient customs; for their ancient and contemporary manuscripts are both before us, and the means of reproduction are now going on. Certainly the scribes intend to be accurate, and have at hand very ancient copies for comparison. But that they made mistakes is shown in my own codex, where, for instance, they misspell the very name of their holy mountain, in a passage which presently I shall quote. Although many errors are corrected in this roll, this glaring one, which spells Gerizim "Gizim," remains untouched, probably because its very familiarity caused it to be read unnoticed.

Christianity did not wait for a system of textual criticism, but took its versions of the Old Testament as the

Jews had come to possess them. When Jerome undertook a new translation, he was condemned almost unreservedly; even Augustine grew timid in his defense; and Jerome, in his replies to the bitter denunciations, flung at his accusers such epithets as "fools," "stupids," and "biped asses." It was dangerous to be a lower critic in those days. After Jerome had been dead a few centuries, however, men began to honor him and his version, and they were so well content with the latter, that textual criticism became almost a lost art, and some of Jerome's references became all but unintelligible for something like a thousand years.

For instance, Jerome in his comment on Galatians iii. 10 upholds the genuineness of the Samaritan against the Massoretic text; while, in his comment on Genesis iv. 8, he speaks more favorably of the Hebrew. Jerome was not alone in his regard for the "ancient Hebrew according to the Samaritan." Eusebius of Cæsarea notes that it was written in a character more ancient than the Massoretic Hebrew. Origen quotes it with respect. There were others of the early fathers who preferred the Samaritan to the Hebrew, and others who quoted the Samaritan as at least entitled to consideration. But textual criticism in the Mediæval Church practically ceased with the adoption of the Vulgate. For hundreds of years no scholar had seen a copy of the Samaritan version, and it began to be doubted whether such a version had ever existed. The attempt to revive the question in the early days of the Reformation, when translations were the order of the day, met with little popular interest. King James's Version was made with tacit faith in the Massoretic text, and the question about the Samaritan version seemed likely to come to nothing.

About this time, European scholars were startled by the actual arrival in Paris of a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch. Then there ensued as lively and fierce a contro-

versy as modern biblical scholarship has ever known. Julius Cæsar Scaliger (1484–1558) is said to have called attention, first, to the importance of finding a copy of the Samaritan text, if it still existed; and his brilliant son Joseph (1540–1609), the greatest of modern scholars, whose interest in textual criticism exceeded even that of his distinguished father, attempted to procure such a manuscript by correspondence with the Samaritans themselves. These letters were answered by Samaritans in Cairo and Nâblus; but the answers were long on the way, and Scaliger did not live to receive them. He died two years before the completion of the King James's Version, and, though he visited England, he cherished a poor opinion of the scholarship and courtesy of England, and died with less appreciation of his contributions to scholarship in his own age than has been accorded to him in later generations.

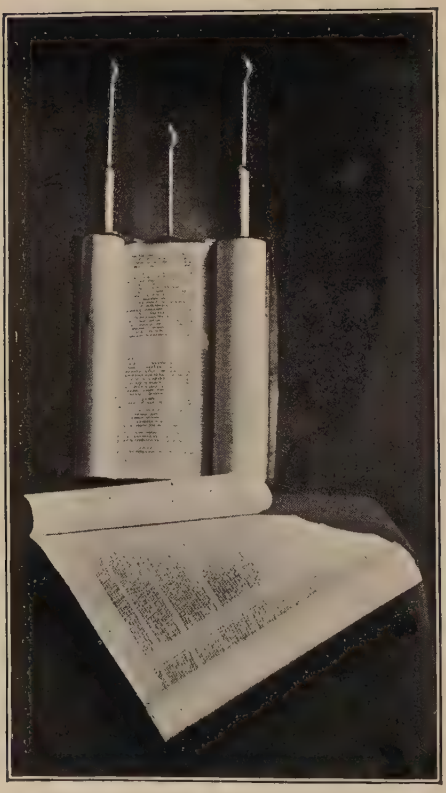
The suggestion of the Scaligers, father and son, bore fruit in 1616. Pietro della Valle (1586–1652), a Roman nobleman, having been disappointed in love, at first contemplated suicide, but instead journeyed to the Holy Land. He tarried a year in Constantinople, where he obtained a commission from De Sancy, the French ambassador, to purchase Samaritan manuscripts. Having consoled himself by marrying a Christian Syrian woman, who proved a brave and helpful companion, he journeyed far. He vainly attempted to procure manuscripts in Cairo and Gaza, where at that time there were Samaritan colonies, and met with no better success at Nâblus, the center of the Samaritan religion. At Damascus, however, he was able to buy two copies of the Pentateuch, one on parchment and the other on paper. The latter he retained, and the former he sent to De Sancy, who sent it to the Library of the Oratoire in Paris. The two copies were used in making the Paris Polyglot, and were reprinted in the London Polyglot.

Archbishop Ussher was profoundly interested in these

manuscripts, and began an effort to secure more. One of these was sent on a ship that fell into the hands of pirates; but others were procured at great cost. In 1671, Robert Huntington, afterward Bishop of Raphoe, visited the Samaritans at Nâblus. The Samaritans appear to have understood him to represent that there were Samaritans in Europe, and they furnished him with a copy of their Law, and wrote a letter to their brethren in England. Thomas Marshall, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, answered this and subsequent letters, of which there were five, and these letters were published in 1699.

In 1733, Benjamin Kennicott (1718–1783) issued his dissertation on "The State of the Printed Hebrew Text of the Old Testament," combatting the doctrine of the absolutely correct transmission of the Hebrew text, by a comparison of 1 Chronicles xi. with 2 Samuel v. and xxiii. In 1759 he published a second work on the same subject, giving a catalogue of extant Hebrew MSS. in London, Oxford, and Cambridge, and defending the Samaritan text. His work roused strong antagonism, but resulted in the contribution of £10,000 to buy Hebrew manuscripts, so that six hundred and fifteen Hebrew codices were at last gathered and collated, and the Hebrew and Samaritan texts were printed in parallel columns in a work extending to thirty volumes. In this work he was able to use sixteen Samaritan manuscripts, most of them incomplete.

It is little wonder that the controversies waxed hot over these documents. King James's Version was completed barely five years before the arrival of the first of these manuscripts; was all this work to be done over? Yet it was not chiefly King James's Version that the conservatives of that day rallied to defend; for King James's Version was not yet in very high favor. The real question was as to the validity of the sources of textual knowledge. The Protestants were placing increased emphasis on the *ipsis-*



PENTATEUCH AND GENESIS.

(Purchased by the Author at Nâblus.)

sima verba of Scripture; nothing pleased the Romanists more than to adduce proof that the documents from which this word was to be translated were themselves uncertain. Generally Protestants opposed the Samaritan, and Romanists favored it; and where a Protestant scholar like Kennicott favored the new discovery he did so at his peril. With Kennicott and his arguments, however, we shall have further occasion to deal. Gradually the controversy died down. King James's Version won its way to popular favor. References to the Samaritan became more infrequent. In 1815 Gesenius devoted an exhaustive work to the subject, showing the general superiority of the Massoretic text, and since his day there has been a general disposition on the part of conservative scholars to ignore it altogether.[1]

It is worth noticing that here and there a voice is raised in protest against this indiscriminate throwing over of the Samaritan Pentateuch. In "The Bible and its Transmission," Copinger, after pointing out the large number of agreements of the Samaritan with the LXX., and the high value set upon it by the early fathers, says:—

"It is quite possible that sufficient importance is not now given to this version; and we venture to suggest that the reaction has been too great. The Samaritan Pentateuch certainly contains readings which do not agree with the present Hebrew text, and some of them are unquestionably to be accounted for by its being copied from a text which differed from that which became fixed by the Massoretes."

Every possible conjecture has been put forth and defended as to the origin of the Samaritan version, and its frequent agreement with the Septuagint. The theory of Gesenius, which was also favored by Moses Stuart,[2] seems most reasonable; namely, that the Samaritan and the Septuagint flowed from a common source older than either, and differing from the Massoretic text. It is impossible that such a text should be wholly lacking in value, even

[1] Cf., however, the Polychrome Bible.—Ed.

[2] Biblical Repository, 1832, p. 714.

though in general manifestly inferior to the Massoretic text. Where it departs from both the accepted text and the LXX., it may have little worth. But there are at least one thousand readings, most of them exceedingly trivial, where the LXX. differs from the Hebrew, and where it is sustained by the Samaritan. The principal variations were printed by Professor Bernhard Pick, in the BIBLIOTHECA SACRA,[1] in a series of articles, which is really more valuable than the work of Gesenius, and for purposes of comparison leaves hardly anything to be desired. His article in McClintock and Strong, also, is very full and painstaking.

Excepting in a few points where there are doctrinal differences between the Hebrew and Samaritan texts, the Samaritan version is quite as good authority as the Septuagint, and perhaps a little better when its antiquity is considered. If it be alleged that the Samaritan priests have been inferior in education to the priests of Jerusalem, and that less care has been taken in copying their Scriptures, it may be answered, on the other hand, that the manuscripts have, nevertheless, a striking consistency, having been confined to a few communities, and of late to a single one, in which they have been less frequently copied, and more frequently compared with versions of undoubted antiquity. Moreover, this singular care of the Jews for their manuscripts dates particularly from the time of the Massoretes; and the Samaritans have at least one manuscript earlier than the Massoretes. In points of doctrinal difference between the Jews and Samaritans, the corroborative value ceases, but in these cases the question of which text is right still remains to be settled.

There are a few minor differences between the Samaritan and the Hebrew where the Samaritan agrees with the Septuagint, and is almost certainly right. For instance,

[1] Vol. xxxiii. (1876) pp. 264–287, 533–557; xxxiv. (1877) pp. 79–87; xxxv. (1878) pp. 76–98, 309–325.

in Genesis iv. 8, the translation of our English Bibles, "And Cain told his brother," is most unlikely. The margin of the American Revised is better, "And Cain said unto his brother." But what did he say? According to the Samaritan, the LXX. agreeing, he said, "Let us go into the field." The circumstances at once confirm this as the probably correct text. Instead of telling Abel what Jehovah had said to him, Cain concealed it, and invited Abel into the field, where, treacherously and with premeditation, he slew him.

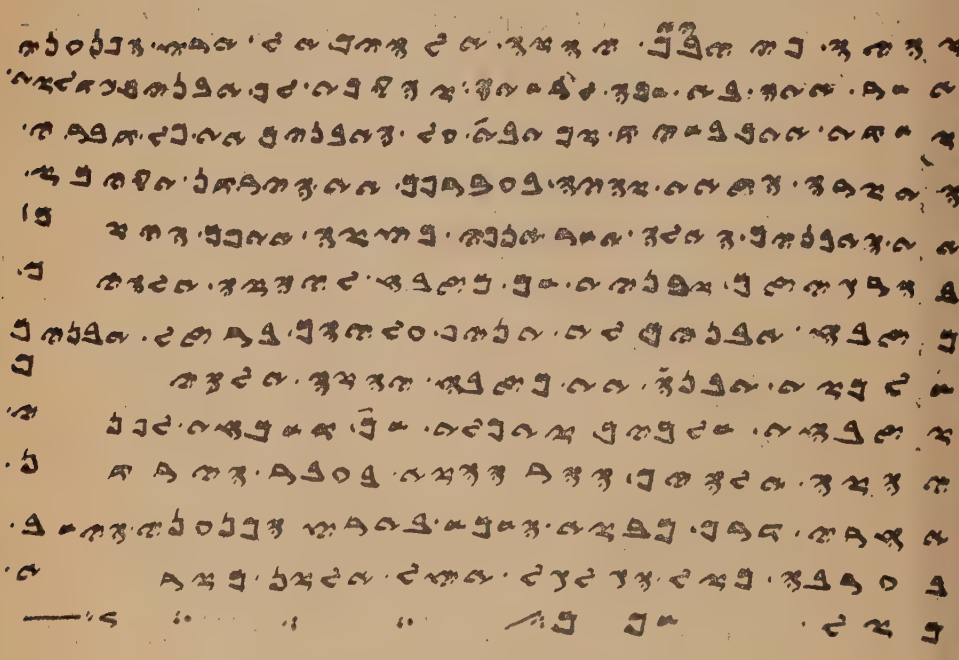
Again, in Genesis xlvii. 21, it is recorded that the Egyptians came to Joseph, and offered to sell not only their lands, but themselves. Our translations from the Hebrew read, "And he removed them to the cities." But the Samaritan tells us, the Septuagint agreeing, that "he enslaved them to slaves," which is probably correct, as the context would indicate.

But there are three points in which there are differences of some importance, and in which one text or the other has been deliberately changed. The first of these is Genesis xxii. 2, where Abraham is commanded to sacrifice Isaac in "the land of Moriah." We know nothing about the land of Moriah, but we do know of a Mount Moriah, where later stood the temple in Jerusalem, and we know of a land of Moreh, the region about Shechem. Either the Jews have changed their text to Moriah to make it appear that the sacrifice of Isaac occurred where later their temple stood, or the Samaritans have changed it to Moreh, and for the same reason, i.e. to give sacredness to their own region. I refer here to Dean Stanley's able treatment of this point, in which he seems to me to have shown, almost beyond the need of further discussion, that Gerizim, and not Jerusalem, was probably the place where Abraham offered Isaac, and also the place of Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek.[1]

[1] Stanley's Sinai and Palestine, pp. 316–319.

Another interesting difference is the insertion in the Samaritan, after the Ten Commandments, of a passage commanding worship on Gerizim. It is frequently affirmed, that, to procure the insertion of this command, the Samaritans have grouped the Ten Commandments into nine, making this a tenth. But the codex before me does not support this view. The Ten Commandments are in three groups (Ex. xx. 1–7, 8–11, 12–17), exactly as with us, though, of course, not divided into verses. Immediately after this, and in the lesson for the same day, compiled from three places in Deuteronomy (xi. 29; xxvii. 2 *et seq.*; xi. 32), is the command to worship on Gerizim.

I give herewith a reproduction of the section following



THE PASSAGE FOLLOWING THE DECALOGUE.
(The marks from middle to left end of last line indicate the end of the day's lesson, which begins with Ex. xx. 1.)

the Decalogue, showing the addition, together with a transliteration into Hebrew, line by line, and a translation into English of the added passage. For this, also, I am indebted to Dr. Foster.

PASSAGE FOUND IN THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH

(Codex Bartonii) Immediately following Exodus xx:17.

Hebrew Transliteration by Frank H. Foster, D. D.

St. xi.29. וְהָיָה כִּי יְבִיאֲךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶל אֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי

St. xxvii.2. אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה בָא־שָׁמָּה לָרֶשֶׁת אֹתָהּ: וַהֲקֵמֹתָ לְךָ אֲבָנִים גְּדֹלוֹת

וְשַׂדְתָּ אֹתָם בַּשִּׂיד: וְכָתַבְתָּ עַל הָאֲבָנִים אֶת־כָּל־דִּבְרֵי

הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת: וְהָיָה בְּעָבְרְכֶם אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן תָּקִימוּ

אֶת־הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם

בְּהַר גְּיוֹם: וּבָנִיתָ שָׁם מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ

מִזְבַּח אֲבָנִים: לֹא תָנִיף עֲלֵיהֶם בַּרְזֶל: אַבְנֵי מִזְבַּח

שְׁלֵמוֹת תִּבְנֶה אֶת־מִזְבַּח יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

וְזָבַחְתָּ שְׁלָמִים וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂמַחְתָּ לְמֵנִי

St. xi.30. יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ: הֲלֹא הֵמָּה הָהוּא בְּעֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן

אַחֲרֵי דֶּרֶךְ מְבוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ בְּאֶרֶץ הַכְּנַעֲנִי הַיֹּשֵׁב

בָּעֲרָבָה מוּל הַגִּלְגָּל אֵצֶל אֵלוֹן מוֹרֶא

מוּל שְׁכֶם:

"And it shall come to pass, when Jehovah thy God shall bring thee to the land of the Canaanite, whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster. And it shall be, when ye pass over the Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones [which] I command you this day, in Mount Gizim [*sic*]. And thou shalt build there an altar to Jehovah thy God, an altar of stones. Thou shalt

not lift up upon them iron. With perfect stones shalt thou build the altar of Jehovah thy God. And thou shalt sacrifice peace-offerings, and thou shalt eat there, and shalt rejoice before Jehovah thy God. This mountain is on the other side of Jordan, behind the way of the going down of the sun, in the land of the Canaanites which dwell in the Arabah, over against Gilgal, beside the oak of Moreh, beside Shechem."

It is not necessary to debate long which of these texts is correct here. It is safe to follow the rule to "prefer the shorter reading," and to treat this passage in the Samaritan as an interpolation in this place supplied from the parallel passages in Deuteronomy. But the question recurs when we come to a consideration of the most important of the differences, the question whether the memorial stones commanded to be set up by Joshua were erected on Ebal or Gerizim.

This passage (Deut. xxvii. 4) is that one over which the discussions of Kennicott's time were waged. As the whole story is involved in the discussion, it will be well to quote the introduction to the cursings and blessings:—

"And Moses and the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying, Keep all the commandment which I command you this day. And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaister them with plaister: and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over; that thou mayest go in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of thy fathers, hath promised thee. And it shall be when ye are passed over Jordan, that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaister them with plaister. And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt lift up no iron tool upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of the Lord thy God of unhewn stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord thy God: and thou shalt sacrifice peace offerings, and shalt eat there; and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God. And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law very plainly.

"And Moses and the priests the Levites spake unto all Israel, saying, Keep silence, and hearken, O Israel; this day thou art become the people of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt therefore obey the voice of the Lord thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.

"And Moses charged the people the same day, saying, These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are passed over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin: and these shall stand upon mount Ebal for the curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali. And the Levites shall answer, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice, "Cursed be the man that maketh a graven or molten image, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and setteth it up in secret. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen." (Deut. xxvii. 1–15.)

This is not a question which can be settled by the alleged superiority of the Massoretic text. One whole group of manuscripts, the Hebrew, agrees that the stones were set up on Ebal; the other entire group that they were erected on Gerizim. Both sets of scribes intended to be accurate in general; neither was above the possibility of mistake or even of intentional change to prove a point. A familiar instance is Judges xviii. 30, where the Jewish scribes have changed "Moses" to "Manasseh." Desiring to free the grandson of Moses from the opprobrium of being the first idolater, and also at the same time to give a gratuitous fling at the Samaritans, they had inserted a *nun*, and changed Moses to Manasseh, as it abides to this day. If the Jews were not too good to make such a change for a trivial advantage, they can hardly have been too good to have changed the passage in Deuteronomy when the question of the priority of their places of worship was involved.

Robertson Smith, and the modern critics generally, agree with the conservatives of Kennicott's day in support of the Massoretic reading. Robertson Smith in the Britannica thinks the Samaritan reading "glaringly unhistorical." The reason, of course, why the unnamed sanctuary in Deuteronomy cannot, in his thought, be Gerizim, and must be Jerusalem, is that, when Deuteronomy was promulgated in 621, Jerusalem was an established fact. But, in that case, why did not the Jews write up Deuteronomy to the facts as they were, and save all chance of a dispute?

And, when the Samaritans had choice of two mountains for their temple, why did they choose the one which would require them to change the text of the Law which they already had?

The arguments of real value on this point are found in the incidental allusions in the account of the setting up of the stones on either Gerizim or Ebal. I cannot agree that any one has answered Kennicott in his study of these. Omitting some trivial arguments, he sustains the contention that the memorial stones erected after the passing of Jordan were upon Gerizim, as the Samaritans claim, by these proofs, which I have adapted somewhat to the argument as it now might stand:—

1. That Gerizim was the mountain of blessings, and altogether more sacred in its associations than Ebal. It is quite unlikely that the altar would be erected on the mount of cursing.

2. That the Samaritans, building their new temple, the rival of that in Jerusalem, would gladly place it in a spot known to be sacred, even as Jeroboam erected his calf at Bethel, because of its ancient and recognized sanctity. Political considerations, as well as religious, would have determined this choice by Sanballat and Manasseh.

3. That, as seen from Shechem, Ebal is parched and barren, while Gerizim's more verdant, fruitful, and beautiful side is toward the city; so that in all times Gerizim must have had the more pleasant associations in the city, the valley, and among the people who passed through the gateway between the two great hills.

4. That Jotham chose Gerizim as the pulpit for his parable, probably because it was already a sacred spot.

5. That probably Gerizim was the traditional spot of the offering of Isaac.

Omitting some proofs which do not seem to me important, Kennicott went on to show:—

THE HIGH PRIEST JACOB, AND THE HOLY SCROLL OF NABLUS.

6. That Joshua's own tribe, Ephraim, the tribe whose capital Shechem was, was stationed upon Gerizim, at the time of the dedication of the memorial stones, and that Joshua would certainly have been with his tribe near the stones that were being dedicated.

7. That the stones were to be used as soon as set up for sacrifice; who were to offer the sacrifices on Ebal? Were sacrifices to be offered by Reuben, or Gad, or Asher, or Zebulun, or Dan, or Naphtali? For these were on Ebal. The great tribes were on Gerizim; and there were stationed the Levites, who only had the right to offer sacrifice. It is absurd to suppose that the altar was erected on the mountain where no one could use it.

Kennicott's conclusion is strong, and to my mind thoroughly convincing. I give it in all the emphasis of the original type:—

"And shall we then refuse to allow that *the Altar and the Law* were placed on the mount of *Blessings*—on the same mount with *Joshua*, the heroic leader of the people—on the same mount with their glory, the tribe of *Judah*—and on the same mount with the tribe of LEVI, who were *the proper and divinely appointed, the only Ministers at that very altar?* Will there be the least presumption in supposing the reader to be now persuaded that this corruption has been hitherto charged upon the innocent instead of the guilty? Certainly, if there is not here *demonstration*, there is at least *strong probability*—that GERIZIM, thus confessed to have been the mount of BLESSINGS and the station of the tribe of LEVI, was the mount which was to be, and which was, honored with *the Altar* and *the Law*. And if the reader be convinced, that the SAMARITANS HAVE NOT corrupted their Pentateuch in this celebrated article, he must be convinced that THE JEWS HAVE corrupted it, and corrupted not only *this text in their Pentateuch*, but also *the corresponding text in Joshua*."[1]

It seems to me that we cannot account for the history of Israel without believing that the command to establish a central sanctuary, so often repeated in Deuteronomy,[2] is

[1] Dissertation the Second on the Printed Hebrew Text, Oxford, 1759, pp. 75–76.

[2] Deut. xii. 5–21; xiv. 23; xv. 19–20; xvi. 11; xxvi. 2, etc. In none of these passages is the place named.

much older than 621 B.C. Whatever may be true of the completed book of Deuteronomy, this part of it, which is the central part in the argument that brings the book down to the time of Josiah, must have been much older. And it is remarkably significant that in all these the sanctuary is unnamed. The conviction has grown upon me in this study that the Jews possessed this command in some form essentially like that in Deuteronomy long before Josiah's day, and before the rise of Jerusalem.

But if the Jews had such a command for the establishment of a central sanctuary, did they obey it? Not at Jerusalem, certainly. Nor yet at Shiloh, though there the ark abode. If they established any central sanctuary, it was at Shechem, and the ceremony of dedication is that outlined in the passage already quoted at length, in the setting up of the stones, probably on Gerizim, which name the Jews long afterward changed to Ebal, for the supposed honor of their own later sanctuary at Jerusalem.

It seems to me altogether probable that, at the time of the settlement of Palestine, Shechem was the logical capital, and probably the place intended as the nation's sanctuary. Situated midway between Dan and Beersheba and between the Jordan and the sea, the place to which Abraham had directed his steps, and the traditional scene of the meeting with Melchizedek and of the offering of Isaac; the home of Jacob; the place toward which for forty years the nation had borne the body of Joseph,—it was admirably fitted to be the national capital and sanctuary. There Joshua established his home; there at the beginning he caused the Law to be ratified; there he erected the memorial and altar; there he convened the tribes in solemn assembly. But the coming to the throne of a king from Judah, with the long strife between David and the house of Saul, made Judah the stronghold of the new dynasty; the capture of the Jebusite fortress after a taunting threat

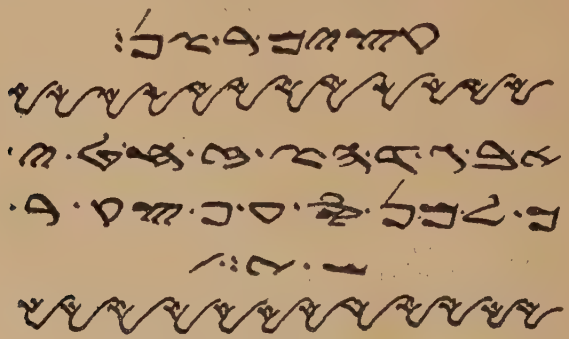
gave David occasion to occupy it, first as a fort, then as a capital, and finally as a sanctuary. Thither, in a time when worship had declined, and the ark was neglected, he removed that sacred relic from its northern home. The first attempt ended disastrously, and David waited long before repeating it. But at last the ark was removed, though the plan of erecting a permanent temple was not accomplished in his day. The whole narrative sustains the impression that no time-honored tradition at that time marked Jerusalem as the central place of worship, and raises the question whether the death of Uzzah was not interpreted as a national rebuke for the removal of the ark to adorn the made-to-order capital of the new military dynasty. But, the ark once there, the center of worship was definitely established.

The building of the temple in the same isolated and sterile town by Solomon gave the movement new power; and the destruction of the outlying shrines by Hezekiah and still more by Josiah, completed what was begun by David. Jerusalem and Judah were established at the expense of Shechem and Ephraim, and the burden of taxation under Solomon fell heavy on the other tribes, that Judah might escape.[1] The nation grew wider with prosperity, but the king's thought limited the real kingdom to Judah, and at last came the inevitable rending apart of Judah and Israel. Judah with its provincial capital stood alone against the real and greater Israel.

If Shechem had been the national capital, with all its sacred associations, dear to all the tribes, and central to them; if the ark had found its abiding-place on Gerizim, instead of in the city which David captured from the Jebusites, and which had no sacred past so far as we know; if Judah had been less arrogant and haughty, and the kings

[1] Solomon seems to have exempted Judah from annual tribute, the burden falling on the other tribes (1 Kings iv. 7–19).

had favored it less at the expense of the other tribes, as must have been the case had the capital been in Ephraim; if the nation had centered about a city built not on an unwatered hill, but in the most fertile valley in the land, and flanked by noble mountains rising above it for defense, would there have been the disruption, rivalry, bad statesmanship, and overthrow which the Bible records? What if the Samaritan Pentateuch had been followed?



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(As written by the High Priest.)

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